

PHOENIX

2000



SIZE

Spring 2003

Notes from the Editor

In 1978 Phoenix was born and the 25th anniversary issue is now a reality. Each year the magazine publishes a wonderful issue representing the state of the world. Phoenix was born in the heart of the desert, and many hours are put into producing a good magazine. It is a labor of love and a part of the legacy. Father Bernard McMahon is the founder of Phoenix, and he stood by through the years, offering his advice and support to the editors. Without him, the Phoenix of today would not exist and we thank him from the depths of our hearts. In celebration of our 25th Anniversary, we invite Father McMahon to comment on the first 25 years.

PHOENIX

25th Anniversary Issue

Note from the Editor:

Spring 2000

In 1975, Phoenix was born and for 25 years has remained the student's Literary Arts Magazine. Each year the magazine has put forth a wonderful issue representing the talent of the women attending our College. Hard work and many hours are put into producing a good magazine and it is an honor to have been a part of this legacy.

Father Bernard McMahon is the founder of Phoenix, and he stood by through the years offering his mentorship and wisdom to the students. Without him, the Phoenix of today would not exist and we thank him from the depths of our hearts. In celebration of our 25th Anniversary, we invited Father McMahon to comment on the first 25 years.

He says, "Like the mythical bird of Egypt, the Phoenix, young and beautiful, who living six hundred years in the desert of Arabia, consumes itself by fire, only to rise again, young and beautiful, for another six hundred years, so the talents of our students live on, young and beautiful, generation after generation, in the pages of the Phoenix." Happy Anniversary!

Erin Carmichael
Editor-in-Chief

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We would like to thank Dr. Kraman for her unwavering support and guidance.

We have learned much under your tutelage.

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Special thanks to Dr. Smart and Esther Kraman, for taking the extra time to be a great friend of Phoenix.

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Table of Contents

8. "Wish" by Diana Wilkins
 9. "Truth is" by Trace Arce
 10. "To Break the Cycle" by Tara Kistler
 12. "Monster" by Tara Alfano
 13. "Belinda's Rage" by Melissa Alia Perez
 17. "Elf" by Renda Brooks
 18. "What Kind of Mother am I?" by Angela Valitutto
 19. "Alcohol" by Cheryl Elizabeth Nyman
 20. "Her Entrusted Confidante" by Sonsiris Tamayo
 21. "Ancram" by Barbara Crespo
 22. "Pigeons and Roosters" By Natalie "Renaissance" Thomas
 25. "Overcoming Adversity" by Lea Iaboni
 25. "Confessions" by Cora Santaguida
 26. "A Question of Theory" by Sherri Carolus
 27. "Untitled" by Tara Kistler
 28. "Fleeing Siam" by Cora Marie Santaguida
 29. "Untitled" by Sonya Nevers
 29. "The Rosary" by Trace Arce
 30. "The Closet" by Diana Wilkins
 31. "If There Could be One More Snowstorm" by Diana Lynn Creaturo
 32. "Untitled" by Tonica Antoinette McAlpine
 32. "A Child" by Gloria Romero
 33. "Gone Camping" by Tanisha McFadden
 35. "The Shape of Substance" by Estella Garcia
 36. "Nanita" by Trace Arce
 36. "A Walk" by Ra Chan
 37. "Waiting" by Angela Valitutto
-

-
38. "Forever Rain" by Tara Alfano
 39. "Roots" by Sonya Nevers
 40. Group Poems/ Introduction
 41. "Love"/"Swing"
 42. "Black Hair"
 43. "Art"/"Bear"
 44. "Hate"/"Lust"
 45. "Fire"
 46. "Untitled" by Dawn Land
 47. "Solitude" by Ra Chan
 47. "Untitled" by Patrica Benard
 48. "Dredlocks" by Diandra E. Verwayne
 49. "Uncovered Sex" by Cora Marie Santaguida
 49. "Still Waiting" by Jamie Kennelley
 50. "For Where They Step" by Barbra Crespo
 51. "Hospital Room" by Cheryl Elizabeth Nyman
 52. "Poor Old Dog" by Barbra Crespo
 53. "Untitled" by Sonya Nevers
 53. "Rebirth" by Brandee Taylor
 54. "Sheets Tangled" by Diana Lynn Creaturo
 56. "Flick of a Cigarette" by Diana Wilkins
 57. "Poor Rich Man" by Jessica Elexis Hamilton
 58. "The Sound of his tone and the way he speak" by Diandre E. Verwayne
 59. "The Warrior" by Jamie Kennelley
 61. "She Cries Floods" by Diana Wilkens
 62. "The Ride" by Angela Valitutto
 63. "When I Look Up to the Sky" by Tonica Mc Alpine
 64. "Haiku" by Anglea Valitutto
 65. "Poets Words Never Die" by Kiesha Willams
-

Wish

if i asked you
to hold my hand...
would you
take it in stride
or would you reject it..
your touch
is all i want..
to hold your hand
is a wish
that i have had
for so long...
so long ago
i wished for you
rewind
backspace
delete
you are here
my fingers
touch yours
wanting
more
do i go back...rewind
go back to that time
of no fear...
do i delete it
just keep it as a memory..
memory of you and me and you
as one...
one...
if i asked you one thing
would you wish for more...
would you hold my hand?
would you complete me
complete me
rewind
backspace
delete...
my wish

Diana Wilkins SAS '02

Truth Is

Truth is

down over there

don't you remember?

by the river bank
when it was swollen
because it always rains
that time of year

down over there

don't you remember?

they found those kids
them kids by the river bank
with their heads bashed in
and pretty clothes all kinds of dirty

them not your kids

down over there

I remember

Them mine

Tracy Arce SAS '01

To Break the Cycle

The Daughter

Sabrina pulled her grey fleece up over her face and ears trying to drown out the tortured howling of the wind. Her heart began to race as she willed her numb legs to work the pedals harder while darkness seeped into the sky like hot broth into a stale crust of bread. Her numb fingers squeezed the breaks and she came squealing to a halt at a deserted intersection. A pair of ghostlike plastic shopping bags came blowing down the street like suburban tumbleweeds; playing eerie shadows in the flickering streetlights. The red light changed and Sabrina was off again, pedaling her old, blue chrome bike. She pulled up to her house and locked her bike to the cast iron fence that snaked the perimeter of her frozen excuse for a yard. She hated this house more than anything. As a child, it always looked dark and ominous; cold, black iron imprisoning lifeless granite and marble. How long would this house hold her prisoner, until her sister graduated from high school, college?

Sabrina climbed the cobalt blue flagstones and fumbled for her keys with numb and useless fingers. She opened the door and quietly stepped into the front foyer. The paint was badly chipped. Sabrina and her younger half sister had made it worse during their respective childhoods, when they used to peel back the chipping paint like the wrapping of a birthday present. The once beige carpeted stair was now a dull greyish brown, and desperately needing a shampoo. Sabrina's nerve endings began to tingle as they unfolded in the heat. She could picture them stretching out like the roots of some ancient tree trying to find a hidden source of ground water. Heaving a sigh, she climbed the stairs and peeled off her clothes, leaving a trail to the brown, ceramic tiled bathroom. Sabrina threw the bathmat onto the floor and climbed into the shower, letting the warm water quiet her screaming emotions.

Sabrina's translucent skin quickly turned a health pink as she reached over with her left hand and picked up the pink, disposable razor from the soap dish. Sabrina played this game every night. Freedom began calling and ringing in her ears. Was this the only way out, bleeding into her resistance? "I will not run away. I will not be a coward," she hummed her mantra monotonously. "I will break the cycle."

Sabrina rested her head against the cool, brown, ceramic tiles letting the warm water mat her strawberry hair to her skull. She wondered where her mother was, and how far she had gotten. She wondered if her mother knew about her husband's suicide. There were so many secrets in her family. Secrets that even she didn't know about, but she owned every god damn one. She signed the mortgage, she would pay the price and shoulder the responsibility. Sabrina climbed out of the tub and chucked the disposable razor into the trash

where it belonged. Sabrina silently thought, "Looks like I am going to have to find a new evening ritual." Cursing her mother, she pulled on her baggy, purple, plaid pajamas and sat down with a bottle of black label Johnny Walker. She curled up on the couch and put the TV on, thankful for some kind of company. Sabrina took a big swallow and closed her eyes, letting the darkness seep into her skin and rush through the red river of her veins.

Sabrina ran the same question through her mind over, and over. It was no big surprise as to why her mother left. Her husband was a big jerk. The first words Sabrina had ever uttered to her stepfather had been, "Shit head." The question that had branded itself into the insides of her eyelids was, "Why didn't she take her children with her?" Even that was not so hard to figure out. Sabrina was not a child. She had just finished college and had found a decent job. Her mother's oldest child had her foot in the door to the rest of her life. Her youngest child would have her father, the Shit Head, to look after her. Sabrina's mother obviously had not figured her late husband was crazy enough to take his own life. Sabrina took another draught from the bottle. Who did that leave to look after Jessica? Sabrina sure as hell knew. Sabrina finished off the last of the Johnny Walker, "This better not turn into my evening ritual, I can't afford it with my taste."

Sabrina felt the cogs and gears churning as the room began to spin out of her control. She closed her eyes, surfing the sea of nausea. Tomorrow she would call the realtor and make plans to sell the house. It was too big for two people and Sabrina hardly had the time for the upkeep, or the money for the taxes. She wondered if she could get a good deal on some of the co-ops on the other side of town. They had their own private beach. The view would be better, and Sabrina longed for the blues, greens, and greys of the ocean. She longed to see the sun rising over Long Island Sound, mirroring tiny sparkles to the sky like pink champagne. All the brown and beige was beginning to sap the life right out of her. Hell, if she was going to have to take on the responsibility of caring for her younger half sister, she was at least going to have a change of scenery. Sabrina turned off the TV, curled her knees up to her chest, and fell asleep on the beige couch like a dejected puppy.

The Mother

Donna kept the engine at a steady seventy. The warm pinks, browns, and beiges of the desert sped by in a brilliant blaze of fire. Her left arm radiated an angry red from dangling out of the window in the harsh desert sun. She cursed, wishing she had remembered to bring some sunblock. The

blue road was an intense contrast to all of the warm colors of the desert. The extreme heat made the pavement wave and sparkle like a narrow river. It seemed paradoxical when juxtaposed with the thirsty arroyos hurrying by. The road stretched out indefinitely. There were no turn-offs, curves, hills, or uncertainty; there was no need to make a decision. Donna wished that the road could remain this way forever. Donna's eyes ached at the sheer intensity of the scenery; it was amazing how something that looked so dead could be so beautiful at the same time. It was certainly a welcome change from the cold greys, greens, and blues of Long Island Sound.

Donna thought about her children. She wondered what they were doing at this moment. Donna thought about her oldest child. She was most proud of Sabrina, the child that had traveled the farthest. Donna smiled, "That kid's engine runs on piss and vinegar." Donna pulled over, stepped out of the car, and walked into the desert. Her tears left dark red spots on the parched ground. She watched her oldest grow from a bright and smiling baby into a dark and cynical child. A child that didn't want its mother and pretended not to need her either. The distance grew with every breath they took. Donna imagined trying to bridge that gap, but it would take a space shuttle to reach her daughter now. It was no one's fault except her own. Donna stayed with a man that beat her child, his stepdaughter, because she thought that any father for her child was better than none.

Donna closed her eyes and tried to recall her own father, the musky odor of his cigars, and the fresh scent of his blue aftershave. He took his life when Donna was eight years old. She never found out why, that was a secret Donna's own mother had taken with her to the grave. Her mother sent her away after her father's death. Gradually, her mother fell apart, drank her liver into oblivion, and herself into an early grave. All along, Donna believed that she would break the cycle. Not so, Donna did nothing more than create a new one, and she couldn't face the pain of that responsibility.

Donna continued deeper into the desert, her face and arms were burning, and her whole body was covered with a fine layer of red desert dust. Donna did not know how to love her oldest child. The child that barely spoke, that asked for nothing. The child that looked at her like she was a fool and wanted nothing to do with a mother's arms. Donna respected her oldest child, the child she made into a survivor. Donna wanted love, not respect. So, she had another child. She loved her children from the bottom up. She kept the baby close to her, and the second was nothing like the first. The second loved, laughed, and danced. Donna was a mother lion when it came to her second born, the one on the bottom;

the second born had been protected. Donna cheered the first steps of her oldest and encouraged the freedom and independence. She kept the baby close; she squandered the first and hoarded the second.

Her baby had eventually grown up though. Her baby fought and ran away as far as she could get. Donna couldn't bear it. She loved her children from the bottom up; only she'd done it all wrong. She spent all of her love on the baby, and there had been nothing left for Sabrina. She curled up in the brown dust, pulling her knees to her chest. This was her cross now, and she would carry it with her to the grave, nourishing the rusty, desert soil with her cerulean

s o r r o w

Monster

She washes her hands clean
But the stain won't wash away
She walks into her room
And sees an empty crowded mess
She looks in the mirror
And sees a monster
She walks towards me
And all I do is pass her by
All she wants is for one to say hi
But everyone fears the monster
She sits quietly by herself
And her only friends are the evil she holds in her hand
All she needs is for one to say hello
For one to say how are you?
She needs a helping saviour
Deep inside she wants someone to care
But all those around her fear the monster
She wants to look in the mirror and see a pretty girl
But what she sees is the monster
The monster she feels she's become
We don't fear the monster
As much as the monster fears herself
Maybe today someone will hold out their hand
And say hello
And say how are you
And just maybe tomorrow
When she looks in the mirror
She won't see that monster
She'll see a pretty girl
And just maybe the next day
No one will pass her by

Tara Alfano SAS '02

Belinda's Rage

I have told you of her demise.
 Now let me tell you how her legacy did arise.
 Of low birth and common breeding,
 Her family was always in money needing,
 But forever content and happy indeed,
 For material goods.
 All they needed came from the woods.

Another child her mother did bear,
 One that was often in Belinda's care.
 Many years did pass,
 And Belinda grew into a fine lass.
 Sweet and dear hearted,
 The two sisters were hardly parted.
 One day the mother called to her daughter,
 "Belinda bring me a pail of water."
 In a few seconds she was off and running.
 For as soon as the work's done there's time for funning.
 She returned an hour after
 filled with giggles and girlish laughter.

When she came home,
 She found herself all alone.
 She found the house pulled inside out,
 And all her belongings thrown about.
 She felt impending doom
 As she searched each room.
 She called her sister's name,
 But no reply ever came.
 But there on the blood stained snow,
 She learned something you should never know.
 When loved ones do not take a breath.
 How quiet and still they are in death.

Soon in the woods she heard a noise,
 Young soldiers really just boys.
 She ran behind a tree and hid,
 And as she stood there, she heard what they did.
 They yearned for money and gold
 And did not what they had been told.
 They searched the country for a likely spot,
 Where they could practice becoming a despot.
 Belinda's family was first,

And they received the worst.
 When the soldiers found no riches here,
 Their anger was a thing to fear.
 They inflicted pain
 So vengeance they might obtain.
 Belinda's mother they raped and beat,
 They cut off her father's feet,
 And her baby sister of five years,
 Was fed her very own ears.

For these blood thirsty young men
 The torture of these innocents did not amend,
 And so they struck them down to death,
 And so her family shuddered their last breath.

Belinda noted well their names,
 When ready she would beat them at their own games.
 And here as she crouched in the wood,
 Her soul began to turn from good.
 Thoughts of hate and loathing,
 Began to emanate from her very clothing.
 Her heart began to grow small and tight,
 And black as the blackest of night.
 For now her hate lay still.
 Orphaned as she was, she moved down the hill
 To her relatives house.
 Her heart still and quiet as a mouse.

As I have said, she was a fine lass,
 As the men began to notice her, it came to pass,
 That suitors came across the land,
 To vie for her hand.
 She in turn rejected them all.
 For she was in love with a man named Paul.
 He had been there when her family died.
 He had held her hand when she had cried.
 Although not pleasing in his look,
 Nevertheless her heart he took.

Now, there in the line of men,
 Was a man with whom none could contend.
 Richard was wealthy, handsome and tall.
 However, alas for him, he was not Paul.

It enraged him so to be beaten by a mere peasant
That he grew quite unpleasant.
He hired men to kill the poor lad
Oh, this man was quite a cad!

Poor Belinda's heart broke in two.
She did not quite know what to do.
He forced her to marry him.
If not her foster family would sing one last hymn.
She had no choice but bend to will.
But with this act her heart grew smaller still.

She had a child, Gavin, whom she loved dearly,
This love showed on her face quite clearly.
She was with him night and day.
Never far from her side did he stray.
He grew to three,
As happy as any child could be.

But one night, in a drunken state,
Richard doomed Gavin to a very short fate.
He raged at the small child.
In his great fever flung him from the castle into the wild.
Belinda shrieked and jumped after her son,
But she just grazed his hand and he was gone.
As he fell she heard his faint cry;
She listened horrified.

With this last and horrible act,
At last none of her good heart was left intact.
With images of her son dead,
She grabbed his sword and struck off Richard's head.
She turned and fled the castle,
And trained years at the art of battle.
She vowed before her death,
The murderers of her family would breathe their last breath.
She would not rest until her sword found,
The neck of each man. Her laughter the last sound
Before the demons of hell came to take their souls.
On their broken battered bodies she would wipe her soles.

Her determination and drive made her the best,
And she was at last ready to take up her quest.

With her weapons in hand,
She scoured the land
When at last she heard of four men,
Trying the land to rend.
She was off in a hurry,
Finally within reach of her quarry.

When at last she met with these blood thirsty creatures,
They failed to recognize her features.
When they realized her background,
At once her back they did surround.
At the end of the ferocious battle,
She had cut down all but one like stupid cattle.
For this one was a special fate.
He had killed her sister, and was the center of her hate.
One by one she cut off each of his joints.
And poked and prodded until the point,
In which he screamed for mercy and forgiveness.
She would not grant him absolution,
and left him quite a mess.
He went out of his mind.
At the bottom of the cliff his body they did find.

Belinda decided to walk the land
Punishing all of man,
For his heinous crimes.
She, herself would only live for the good times.
As she defeated more and more fiends,
Her ego and arrogance grew bigger it seems.
It grew until it took charge and led her
To believe she was the ultimate power.
As they say "Pride goeth before the fall",
And this was the most painful of all.

Melissa Alia Perez SAS '01



"Elf" by Renda Brooks SAS '03

What kind of mother am I?

As I gaze into the stars my mind begins to wander.
I was a mother. But am I anymore?
My incapacitation has blinded me.
I look but I cannot see her. Where has she gone?
Where is my daughter? Why haven't I heard her calling for me?
My heart has run away without my feet
The scars I have...
I have no answer for my faults.
I search for the knowledge to understand myself.
Perhaps then I can get to know her, find where her heart's been left
for me to find. Will she let me bring it back to her?
With life as painful as the one I live each day
There's nothing left. What can I give her?
I can't give her me, it is me I do not have yet.
But I will give myself the gift I gave her-life,
as I beg for mercy and pray for forgiveness.
I cannot see this light that sees me.
I cannot feel this love I am not worthy of.
I cannot be a mom today.
I cannot be myself today.
Does she know me?
I miss my daughter.

Angela Valitutto SAS '00

Alcohol

Darkness eats from within
Grabbing forcefully, only knowing sin
Sucking in, violently as an attack
Abusive words striking,
As it continues to eat flesh.

Tornado of emotion,
Swirling in one direction
Which anger is it today? Aggression?
Running from a buried emotion
Filling glass once again for an answer
The key to success in their minds is obsession.

One, two, three, four,
Let's begin the angry war.
Fighting in unhappiness and sorrow
Will you still be alive tomorrow?

Cheryl Elizabeth Nyman SAS '01

Her Entrusted Confidante

I am silver and exact, I have no preconceptions, what ever I see I swallow immediately. Just as is, not distorted by love or dislike I am not cruel, only truthful. The eye of a little God, four-cornered. Most of the time I meditate about the opposite wall. It is pink, with speckles. I have looked so long I think it is a part of me, of my heart. But it flickers; faces and darkness separate us over and over.

She comes in, it's two in the morning with cheeks tearstained, her eyes all wet and her lips are still trembling. She is writing. Her hand shaking as a new tear comes down her cheek, she asks the question for the millionth time. Why? Why? Why? Is there something that she doesn't see that says hurt me, hurt me please! We speak silently. I mostly listening to her questions and she answers for me when I'm at a loss for words a minute later, nose wiped and eyes dry, she regains her composure and says

F*** THIS SHIT!

But begins to cry again, seeing all her self- pity as she drowns in it.

Several minutes pass, ok again, she walks away lighter than before her entrance into the room with pink walls and speckles in it.

Sonsiris Tamayo SAS '02

* The first stanza of this poem is from Sylvia Plath's "The Mirror."

Ancram

3 years ago I was thrown out of the truck along with my bike
I was just a little kid
I was yelled at and mishandled
I was sent to find my way back home
Somewhat cold and night soon approaching
It seemed impossible for me to get home

I really don't know what I did so wrong
It's amazing to see no witnesses
I was torn to pieces
I was frightened and embarrassed

I was just turned over to the wilderness
I don't even know how I made it
I still don't know why they did it
I'll never forget that day in Ancram

Barbara Crespo SAS '02

Pigeons and Roosters

Pigeons

shorty why you try to play that man in the club
knowing damn well you wanna climb up in his hot tub
perpetrating like you know you just too fly
like you not goin to say yeah
if he offer you a ride
it be that first chick
that wanna holler out scrub
when she see you push a drop benz she wanna show love
what difference do it make how much money he make
get your own job
eat your own cake
then if he don't meet your standards you can leave him alone
but don't you DARE wait for him to turn on your cell phone

would smile in my face
and shake my hand
but if I turn my back
would be tryin to f*** my man
see me passing and say
ooooh that outfit is cute
telling everyone else
"she had on a fake chanel suit"
because you in your man's passenger seat
you wanna holler what's up to me
in case you didn't know
that makes you a scrub too lady
yes ladies
some of us do play ourselves
and if you sittin there thinkin
oh she ain't talking bout me
you need to be one of the first to check yourself
because the bottom line is
if there wasn't a reason
these brothers wouldn't be out here
calling girls pigeons

Roosters

who you callin a chicken or a pigeon or anything of that nature
 then have the audacity to wonder why women hate ya
 why we call scrubs and dogs and things like that
 cause y'all cornball roosternecks don't know how to act
 gassed up on your self cuz your pushing a lex
 but your pushing a lex living in the projects
 then you gonna wanna talk bad bout me
 but all i tell you what i see
 if it don't apply to you
 don't take it personally
 but if you know you a rooster
 don't take it out on me
 i'm not the reason why you in that state
 so don't be mad when i ain't giving you the time of day
 you can't do jack for me
 cuz you can't do jack for self
 so how you getting involved with anyone else
 i don't need nobody's help trying to take care of me
 shit that's the reason why i got a college degree
 how you going approach a girl by grabbing her arm
 man you lucky you don't catch a knee in your balls
 how you think you gettin my number off some crap like that
 you think you being cool
 i think i'm being attacked
 off the bat
 you showing me you ain't got a drop of class
 but yet i'm supposed to want to give you the ass
 you rooster neck cats all make me laugh
 ya mama bought you some new kicks so you got reason to brag
 ya rooster neck cats all make me laugh
 wanna be a playa
 and can't afford the rules
 wanna be a thug
 and can't afford the tools
 wanna be a baller
 and can't afford the jewels
 wanna run it all
 and you can't afford the shoes

Roosternecks
the type of dudes i can't stand
never heard of hello or excuse me ma'am
all thugged out when he with his manz
but first looking for cover when things blow like fanz
sayin "i got my own apartment"
in you mama attic
"i got my own car"
an 81 automatic
and that's only on days when it's running
cuz that broken down piece of crap always need something
roosternecks always about to do something
6 months later they ain't did nothing
and they start talkin
bout things they wantin
and always got a story
bout a chick that they just hit
and got all kinds of schemes
for how they gonna get rich
really think i'm supposed to be on his stick
trying to impress me who he came with

when i don't wanna talk i must think i'm all that
no it ain't that
i just got standards black
i got a set of criteria you don't meet
and for that reason we can't speak
and you shouldn't be mad at me
i just put the mirror in your face and let you see
you can go ahead and act like ya ain't heard
lookin at me like i'm sayin things that's absurd
some of you still ain't trying to hear my words
stick around and raise your daughters so they don't become birds
teach ya son to be a man tell him the facts
so in the future my daughter won't be calling him a roosterneck
they say the apple don't fall far from the tree
so if his daddy's a roosterneck what's he goin be
someone that's always talking something
ain't about nothin
and stay frontin
bout things they wantin
if you know a cat
that sounds like that
what you holla back
roosterneck!

Natalie Renaissance Thomas SAS '00

Untitled

Overcoming adversity, we loved.
With no questions asked, none were volunteered.
When we had listened to the confusion,
Eternity glided through our fingers.
Constantly coming up lonely hearted,
And growing tired of reaching deep inside,
Within the celestial shadows, we love.
Until the night, when we are together,
Our chaotic love serenades my heart.
Kissing the lovely darkness of your skin,
I let you lull me to serenity.
Turbulent emotions will rise and fall.
While I debate with a love I fell true,
Within the celestial shadows we love.

Lea laboni SAS '02

Confessions

The wind takes them through an open
window
An unbiased silver stream lines my path
The faster you go, the sooner I
am shriven by the open road
That's what I love about you
Your ability to forget

Cora Santaguida SAS '00

A Question of Theory

Do me a favor and
 Rid me
 I feel like a
 Nonsense or
 Uncommon thief
 I unsubtly fought my way
 into your poor life
 trying to penetrate you
 I feel so determined
 To make you mine
 Knowing very well
 It will never be
 The feeling drives
 Over me
 A jealousy
 Thick and sloshy
 For no particular
 Reason
 A confusion
 Harsh and hurtful
 To make you happy
 Means the world
 to me
 to share your hurts
 but to lock you up
 causes pain
 to me
 Hatred for me
 I like you and
 I hate you
 A weird
 Self-explanatory
 Combination
 I get so discouraged
 Making you happy
 I try not to pollute
 Yourself
 With me
 I confuse myself
 I'm unknown to the world
 To distinguish
 Pain and
 Happiness

Penetrates my soul
 In a swollen mess
 it now hurts to think
 so bad
 that I cry
 It is stupid
 why
 I do this
 it is strange
 since I know you
 love me
 and would save me
 forever
 but nothing is
 better
 than to understand
 this all needs
 to be saved by
 my unhappy self
 I shall continue
 this hell
 forever
 It shall never
 run through me
 like so much
 I tell you
 It is a crime how fast
 the words pour through
 me
 I need you and myself to
 get this
 my life means so
 much splendor
 but gives much grief
 you have helped this
 and I have realized
 now it will
 soon be over

Sherri Carolus SAS '03



Untitled by Tara Kistler SAS '01

Fleeing Siam

Tangled
 in the night walks the
 Fugitive
 Drenched
 with uncertainty
 Blown
 by betrayal
 Through the fog
 of loneliness walks the
 nameless stranger
 Craving
 acceptance
 Searching
 for a soul
 Alone
 in the darkness wanders the
 criminal
 Oppression
 not far behind
 Freedom
 too far ahead
 Tears
 come easily to the
 Invisible

Cora Santaguida SAS '00

Untitled

All expectations of a favored place, but it was a false review
They never told me there would be a hostile change in my childhood
Transformation of my memories, some yes, but not bad
Difference yes, but not based on the sinister foundation above.
For inside it was sweet, filled with joy and sunshine,
Smiles in abundance and happiness according to clarity.
All changed with isolation, confinement with no sign of formation
They were all lies, in all these thoughts all together a secret.
Divided by the unfortunate art of change, hope hangs still.
Sweeping fresh images of a strong, yet strange future.
In its fullest, uncorrupted passion blinded by the act of change
All the elements of this place will be broken, that is fate
In its non existence, an image of ruthless dissection
A volume of incarnation echoes an immobilized life.

Sonya Nevers SAS '00

The Rosary

A bed of roses
Isn't that what every one wants?
Mama and las tias said that I would be happy,
that he would be a good husband and father.
Look at how handsome he is.
Look at how well he dresses.
He is buena gente, good people. You will be happy.
I am the lucky one.

It has been a year and already I'm at the altar.
Mustering the strength of the rosarios, I sit and pray.
Nadieme dijo que iba ser asi, nadie.
I light a candle. I sit and pray some more.
That is what I am supposed to do.

I should have learned my lessons.
I should have looked.
Abuelita, Mama, Tia Rosa, Tia Carmen
They had their bed of roses
I do not want a bed of roses anymore.

Tracy Arce SAS '01

The closet

As you stand there
And read your thoughts
That have turned into words
My eyes have begun to water
The tears overcome me
And your voice on the other end
Begins to quiver
Your secret has been revealed
And you are afraid
Feelings of anger take over my body
This ignorance is killing me
I wish I could be there to stop it all
To stop your tears and their yelling
But I can't
I sit and listen
Listen to them tell you that
"It's just a phase" or "Get out of my house you f***in' dyke"
And as the tears slowly reach my lips
My mouth opens
And I tell you it's going to be o.k.
But it really isn't
I know once the phone is hung-up
They will kick you out
You will call me tomorrow from a pay phone
And tell me what happened
Tears will be shed again
Again ... Again the receiver will click shut
I think *Why can't they accept you for who you are.*
You didn't choose this
And then the flame goes out
And it all becomes clear to me...Ignorance.

Diana Wilkins SAS '02

If There Could be One More Snowstorm

If there could be one more snowstorm
would you come here again?

If there could be one more snowstorm
I would tell you more about myself
my secrets, my hopes, my dreams
I would want to know more about you.

If there could be one more snowstorm
maybe I would touch your hand or
smile more or look further into your eyes
and try to see deeper inside you.
I would try to discover you.

If there could be one more snowstorm
maybe next time I would wrap my arms
around you while you sleep, or ask if
I could rest my head on your chest
feel the human contact
feel the warmth of someone liking me back.
Maybe I would feel safe and not
cheated betrayed or hurt.

If there could be one more snow storm
would I feel my soul leave my body the way it
does everytime I see you
would it feel free, light and unafraid
would it feel changed, pretty and daring
would it feel calm, but at the same time
get filled with that unexplainable rush
that you have been able to bring back
after a year of Somber Solitude?

If there could be one more snow storm
would there still be an honest man sitting next
to me?
would there still be an honest man waking with me?

If there was one more snow storm
would I get
the first kiss
from the first someone else?

Untitled

Sitting at my desk
boiling, trying to study
more, more, more
all the pressure, trying to prove myself
I'm trying to do it
I really am
No one understands
It comes like the wind
to some people
but not to me
I can do it
I know I can
But it's hard.

Tonica Antoinette McAlpine '02

A Child

So sweet a creature
Such an innocent face
Sometimes filled with
 Joy and laughter
Other times with
 Pain and hurt
Knowing the unknown
seeing the unseen
Always asking, looking and stating
Things cannot be
Asked, seen or said.
Only a child

Gloria Romero SAS '00

Gone Camping

Mikey loved to cause mischief. If there was a way to get into trouble, Mikey found it. Wherever there was trouble, Mikey was close by. His ways were especially bad since he turned eight. Everyone heard, and used, the phrase “terrible twos,” but in Mikey’s case, it was “terrible eights.”

“Mikey!” Mikey’s mom yelled from her bedroom.

“Yeah Mom?” he whined from his tent set up in the spare room.

He begged his father to set it up even after his mom protested. Mikey’s father always gave him what he wanted.

“Mikey, can you please go downstairs and water the plants in the living room? I asked you to do that an hour ago.”

“But Mom, you can’t ask me to do stuff. Remember? I’m not here. I’m camping.”

“Well I’ll remember not to ask you anything once you water those plants. I promise.”

Mikey stomped out of the room. Then he stomped all the way downstairs like he was trampling over gigantic bugs. He really hated watering the plants because there were so many of them. They were all by the living room windows. None were too far away so they could all share the sun rays. “Plants need tans too,” was what his mom always said.

Mikey was more upset when he saw he had to go downstairs to get the spray bottle.

“Dag. Now I gotta go all the way downstairs just to get some water for the stupid jungle.”

Mikey went down to the kitchen to find the spray bottle. He was filling it with water and gazing out the window into the backyard.

“Hope she doesn’t want me to water her garden too.”

He was on his way back upstairs when he noticed that the garden hose was still in the front yard. His father had washed the car earlier and forgot to put the hose away.

Mikey looked from the spray bottle to the water hose, then back to the spray bottle. A smile spread quickly across his face. Then he sprinted upstairs to the living room.

“I’ll just open the windows real wide,” he said in a sing song voice, “and that should do it. Oops, almost forgot to lift the screens too.”

Mikey went out the front door and stood in the front yard with the garden hose in his hands.

“She wanted the plants watered, they’ll be watered,” he said softly in his most wicked voice. *Besides, he thought, the garden hose is just like one big spray bottle.*

“Here we go!” Mikey said while he sprayed into the living room window.

Mikey laughed wildly as he watched the water splash the plants. He controlled the hose like a drunk driver controlled a car. He didn’t even notice people staring at him as they walked by.

He sprayed from window to window, making sure he got all the plants.

After about five minutes, Mikey stopped torturing “the jungle” with the monsoon.

He dropped the hose back to the ground and ran into the house.

“All done,” he said as he walked to inspect the plants and closed the windows.

As he walked, he heard a squishy noise. He blocked it out as he closed the first window. But he heard it again as he went to the second window. The living room carpet was soaked.

Mikey eyes widened as he knelt to feel

the carpet. It was soaked from the window to the table, which was close to the couch. Luckily the couch wasn't wet.

"Since there are no witnesses, I think I should leave the scene of the crime."

Mikey ran up the stairs and dashed into his tent.

"Mikey did you give the plants enough water?"

"Yes mom. They have more than enough water."

"Oh Mikey, I hope you didn't over water them."

Mikey didn't respond so his mom decided to go check on the plants. He wished that he could disappear as he heard his mom walking down the stairs.

The next thing he heard was, "MIKEY WHAT DID YOU DO?"

"Remember Mommy, no more questions. I went camping."

Tanisha McFadden SAS '00

The Shape of Substance

Eyes so black, hair as well

My skin is a smooth reddish brown piece of clay

I bear a striking resemblance to my parents, but not exact in all ways

Thicker

Fatter

Wiser

More Intellectual

Still I am not the form that my father wants me to be

I am a substance entirely different from his mold

I have a voice of my own

A body I want of my own

I want to be free besides being an example of a followed rule

I am fire and he is water

Two different substances

Estela Garcia SAS '02

Nanita

pardonne, please forgive me
my faith has abandoned me
given up, afraid of me
I've transcended to being a
betty crocker in a can
a sell out
wrapped in a neat
little package

Tracy Arce SAS '01

A Walk

Chiseled stone set in place
Paved roads upturned and worn
Light steps passed unnoticed,
Roar of engines bursting to Life...

Soft spring hidden away,
Tucked under a blanket of snow.
Leaves turned and billowed about,
Creatures stirred and scurried past.

Cries of hunger pierced deep slumber,
The soft cooing of a young mother caressing her babe
Laughter echoed in a windy voice
Children play in perfect harmony...

Up and down the windy road,
A place to stay, to play, to know.
Beckon and succumb to youthful moods
Towards a day's end in quiet solitude.

Ra Chan SAS '00

Waiting

Her hands ache with the feeling of winter.
She sits, waiting for an answer.
It's as if her hands resist the pen.
The pen depicts her loneliness, her isolation.
As her hands quiver from more than a chill, the pen escapes her.
She slowly picks up her head.
She looks out the window and sees the fragile branches suffering
from winter's sickness.
Her life is as frail as her smile is weak.
She waits patiently for an answer.
As she cries, her tears warm her cold cheeks.
She feels a sort of comfort as they slowly slither down her face.
She sits quietly and remembers what she had.
She is waiting to feel warm again.
She greets this familiar heartache.
She is cold.
She is lonely.
She waits quietly.

Angela Valitutto SAS '00

Forever Rain

He stands there still
The air stops in one last breath
Looking blank as his world turns
His hands clenched together
He sees his fondest memories
Flashing before his eyes
Beat, Beat...Beat, Beat...and it all stops
What was going to be tomorrow,
Has now ended today
A bright calming light shines above him
His body lies there
His hands on his chest
Calmly his loving spirit drifts
The bright light fades
And our black shadows appear
Forever rain I see from their eyes
His yesterday is eternally our everyday
Now almost six years of feeling like yesterday
The falling rain still falls,
But it falls within
Painful hearts, and saddened souls
As we remember the happy times
Forever rain,
Falling from our eyes,
Pouring from our hearts
Forever rain, Forever eternity....

Tara Alfano SAS '02



"Roots" Sonya Nevers SAS "I")

Group Poem Women's Multicultural Literature

October 1999

The poems in this series were generated in response to readings of work by women from traditional cultures. Inspired by the group chants of Moroccan women, and poetic forms involving two line units, we undertook a series of group poems. The class formed into paired teams. Each pair picked a noun. Then each pair wrote one or two lines and passed it on to another pair of poets. There was much laughter and also, serious attention to language and form. The results reflect the sensibilities of those who participated. Rather than poems of two line units, the poems emerged as wonderfully coherent and complete works in which one hears the voices of young women joining in some new group songs.

Participants

Nadine Alvarez, Tracey Arce, Melody Barreiros, Lisa Carino, Chantel Chenalt, Yesenia Chevalier,

Jaclyn Cruz, Christine Emond, Jane Graver, Kelli Hyatt,

Lea Iaboni, Lorraine Jackson, Myrlene Jajoute, Faiza Khan, Maria Maxwell, Christina Nyman,

Sonya Nevers, Erica Pitts, Faith Racette, Rodina Roberts Unique Scott, Chachanna Simpson,

Brandee Taylor, Kenturah Taylor, Toiya Ward

PHOENIX

Love

Intrigued by his smile
Open off his touch

Only a hero will allow his heart to be dropped from a cliff

Love is a mystery love is something I thought would never do
But now I am caught, in spite of myself
Because my parachute is entangled in a tree
I fear it and invite it

Now I have to start again on this roller coaster of love
Love can make a person mad is sweet and pure
Love can turn your world upside-down
A man-made concept that blames women for all troubles and entrapments

Love burns like a flame ever burning till eternity

Besides a Rubik's Cube love is the most confusing thing in life
Time consuming exhausting at times

SWING

Swing, something that everyone wants to ride on
But is scared to fall off
Swing, it's not for everyone

Swings can make you dizzy swinging high butt in seat, legs in air
Flowing through the air almost touching the sky
Then jumping off for the ultimate high
Not afraid to fall, or slip through the air
Falling, falling, freely gliding through the air
Hold your breath and close your eyes
Just let go of yourself and give it your all
Just hope and pray that you don't fall

Black Hair

Relaxed, free flowing expression
Braided or sewn, woven to perfection

Thick, nappy woolen locks of pride
Like my hair natural, not over processed and dyed

It covers my eyes and warms my ears

The color of my roots
Buried beyond my fears
Which explain my tears

Soft, delicate, unique

Soft to touch, beautiful to look at

My heart runs free with the need of it

Hair holds the strength that keeps me strong
It also holds my outer beauty

Fire is sometimes used on black hair
Bonding intentions with care

Dreading the curling, the wrapping and
Relaxing and the long hours of preparation

Locks, curls, perms & braids

Afro, cornrolls, even low-cut fades

Our hair can be expressed in so many ways

Because of its uniqueness and beauty

Black hair is beauty, Black hair is unique, the black hair of a black woman

Art

Art is

The love of all creation

A gift bestowed upon us not everyone has the gift

A means of expressing yourself all emotions come through

The movement of art is imitated in a fire quickly consuming everything

A simple dot can mean so much on an empty canvas

But nothing means as much to one and none to another

Expression of the soul enabling the body to perform

Art is life examined, admired Art is the image of self A child's view of the world

The art of lovemaking is an acquired gift that everyone does not receive

Sometimes representation sometimes a personal camouflage

Splashing, sprinkles, yellow, red & blue or sprinkles that are red and white

Art is not good if I don't see it why do I have to be so blind?

Bear

You're there for me as a shoulder to cry on

And now your fur is soaking wet with my tears

Now you are destroyed by flames

Only memories remain

I share my deepest thoughts and desires with you, I trust

That you will never give away my secrets and be unjust

You lay beside me

And I let you into my deepest treasures

Big, soft, woolen source of comfort

Or a pillow for my mind.

Someone I can count on at any given time.

Tim is his name a stuffed dog instead of a bear

I like it when he strokes me, the claw marks

Are hidden underneath my hair

Safe and protecting, yet dangerous as hell

Big Brown and Beautiful

No sleep until we are both snug under the covers

I wish its heart would beat, when it's next to me

Hate

Ahhh....Hatred, what a word, it embodies the soul and turns it into ice
But *BOILING* emotions got me to this point
Hate should be something you think but not
Tell, it burns the heart and fills you with tears
Hate very strong. Love very hard.
Don't let it color you with bitterness
The greatest tragedy ever

Will this feeling subside?
Or will it take me on a wild ride.

It's easier than love.

Burning rage fills my soul
I cannot act on it or I will lose my parole!

Hate is as intense as *fire*
Consuming everything in its path

Lust

Desire takes over all feeling urgency fills me...
It takes over my entire being my soul, mind and spirit
It gets my rivers flowing keeps my ears ringing and my blood fiery

A touch A tongue A taste

It engulfs me and holds me captive
Dare I let myself succumb?
Of course! I yearn for excitement and fulfillment
In a heavenly ocean of passion Our bodies fear no emotion

It takes over my body

The point of excitement is the moment I am waiting for you
You enter my body with long loving touches

Fire

Passion is like a fire
Intense like an eternal fire
That only we can put out
By the cold response to that flickering flame
Ashes to dust
Nowhere to be seen
But the fire you see burns deep within me
On the surface you see dry ice I look so cool but hot to the touch
My flame is so intense you can't even blow
It out I hope it doesn't make a drought
Don't play with fire because it burns out and will leave a scar
Relationships are like fires they go out if left unattended
Fire can be good if you're into pain
Fire—an essential element—brings renewal to life
Or it can bring much sorrow and shame



Dawn Land SAS '01

Solitude

Leafless trees stood out on empty fields
Swaying back and forth...
Can they defy those strong gusts?
White barren land laid out like patterned gloves
Strange designs slashed across its surface
Sunlight bounced on hard cold skin
Untouched and glistening
With moisture from the morn.

Shadows upon shadows
Casting upon each other in mixed complexity.
A footprint in the snow
Disturbed what once was whole
Regained by falling stars
Settles on the earth
Untouched...

Ra Chan SAS '00

Untitled

four corners.
each looking at the other daring it to tell.
each too afraid from the aftermath.
a scream.
a cry.
nothing.
her tiny neck feels his leather belt.
airtight She gasps
seeing images of a life that has yet to be lived.
She gasps a tear nothing
is it over?
her body is paralyzed.
he invades her, forcing her to be
a part of unknown reality.
pain.
he invades her once more.
death.
four corners are the only witnesses
silence will keep her secret.
the walls will never tell.

Patricia Bernard SAS '00

Dreadlocks

Connecting to what once was
From the harshness of daily process
Extending its length gradually
To pure naturalness

The beauty of it
Is its length

The extension of one's strength
A sense of human identity
One's uniqueness

Twisting,
Entangling,
And connecting
To what once was

Diandra E. Verywayne SAS '00

Uncovered Sex

Stays uncovered
no matter what you do
Stone
Immobilized humiliation
frigid
Superficially textured
Sinfully smooth
Uncovered sex
Has always been my desire

Cora Santaguida SAS '00

Still Waiting

You haunt my dreams and caress my nightmares
Like a fuzzy blanket wound too
tight
Constricting, binding me to a love I was never meant to feel

Skin merging with skin
Pulsating, quivering until
it becomes one
Unifying us in an eternal embrace

I can still see you within my soul.

I struggle to set you free
before you numb me
And shut me out of myself.

But I see you nod
still waiting.

Jamie Kennelley SAS '00

For Where They Step

She heads down to her kitchen.
Places the pot on the burner
Empties the wine, liquor, perfumes and flowers into the pot
Flicks on the gas

Takes the empty wine bottle
Crushes it in her kitchen towel
Sprinkles it on her staircase
With caution she heads back to the kitchen

Turns off the gas
Takes the empty liquor bottle
Pours the mixture into it
Decorates it with ribbon
Fastens it with a cork

Unconsciously walking up the stairs
Embedding the shattered fragments
While the water is running
She pours the mixture into the tub
Cork, ribbon and all

Removing her robe
Making her face and hair
She then steps into the heat
She sinks down in
Lays there in silence
Gazing off into space

Her feet swelled and infected
Plucking out each piece
Soaking them in liquid
She scolds them

Barbara Crespo SAS '02

Hospital Room

"Most beautiful Mother" I said.
Gripping onto a weakened hand
Machines dripping in serum her fragile body
Monitors reading pulse, line, wave, tone
Beating together simultaneously.

Tossing, turning, shaking.
Violent seizures Thrusting her body
Fragile arms reaching for me
Clutching onto, frightened and scared
Reach out to me dear Mother
Because I'm here as you are well aware.

"Most Beautiful Mother" I said
The gloomy hall smells of human sickness
Trapped here, wishing to escape
My beautiful mother you are here
And this isn't any mistake
Traumatic experiences bounce sudden
Challenges, fear, unexpected tears
Most Beautiful Mother you are here.

Cheryl Elizabeth Nyman SAS '01

Poor Old Dog

Feelings of guilt take over my mind

At first I didn't know what was wrong
Knew he was hurt
Saw the trail of blood

I thought it had to be his legs
Cause he hasn't moved
I wanted so much to call for help
But all I could do was gulp
Wonder if it was a car or a person

Some passers by stared and screamed
Others were sorry but really didn't know what to do
I too was in shock

Noticed he started to move
When I looked again he was gone
Peered out even more
He was dragging himself along the floor
His hind legs were shattered
Maybe pelvis too

He was so thirsty
He dragged himself across the street to lick a tiny puddle
On the floor
Thank God it rained earlier today
But then it started again
At last he was given some food
Poor dog ate every last bit

Then he kept on moving once the rain was gone
Think he's at the bottle collection place
Maybe his owner's over there
As I peer out again
I think I see him
Some object far away
Curled up into himself
Seeking warmth and comfort

Barbara Crespo SAS '02

Untitled

To hold me captive
in that dark place above
my skin is to deny me
of a paradise
within.

To pull the secret of
my soul in a place where
the mirror does not share
my reflection.

This holds my face captive
in an undefined reflection.
To see my face tremble in
one shade.

When the colors of my
Paradise are under my skin.
I will become confined to this
Silent shade and color
defined by a body
that will become old and
Decay.

Sonya Nevers SAS '00

Rebirth

They are as sweet as the juice from the first forbidden fruit
and as sour as the juice from the last.
They are my tears, they have melted away my flesh
and have maintained my spirit.

Brandee Taylor SAS '01

Sheets Tangled

You are here
Lying in my bed
Your naked body
Above me, beneath me
It doesn't matter
It's your fingertips
Your hands
Your lips
Your arms, legs
Entangled in mine
Like branches of a tree
Twining together in the
Wind
Being strong enough for each other
To hold each other together
From the storms outside
From the storms within
Your hands on my face
Your fingers in my hair
Your touch EVERYWHERE

SHEETS TANGLED

In our lovers' dance
Pillows tossed in our lovers' fit
You breathe out, I take in
Beats of our hearts echo in the darkness
Do you moan for me, I cry for you
Pull me to you, press you against me
Say my name, say I Love You
Do you start with a kiss
Do you start with a touch
Do you thrust hard from yearning
Am I your constant, constant
Inside
Burning
Need of desire
Of lust
Of sacredness
Of passion, of love
You are kind, you are gentle
You are rough
Either way my body
Answers it responds

PHOENIX

IT IS ALWAYS

YES, YES, YES

Can we explode together

Yes

But sometimes your touch

Can't make me wait

Can I lay myself out on top of you

Let my hair tickle you

My hands map out your body

My kisses put out your fire

My tongue ignites it again

Slow or fast, sweet or cheap

I have been it all for you

When you kiss

Will you kiss

Long and hard

Sweet and wet

Never ending motions

Of your lips on mine

In this burning

Burning yearning lover's nest

Can I claw, can I bite

Could I make it more fun

For you to put up a fight

Put your mouth on my breast

Can I put you inside me

More ways than one

Say you love me, say you love me

When the pleasures drizzle off

Into sweet sweat and

Dreamy sleep

Among the tattered sheets

In your arms, body warm

One last kiss and close

Our eyes

And dream of the next

Encounter

Of our bodies, the perfect fit

And in the morning

Wake to feel you, to feel me

And say

YES, YES, YES I love you

Diana Lynn Creaturo SAS '01

The Flick of a Cigarette

it's the flick of a cigarette
 you are parallel to me
 ani difranco lyrics
 beat on as
 rubber hits pavement
 traveling at high speeds
 wind trying to catch up with

us

rubber hits pavement
 over and over again
 top speed, top sound
 wind whistling
 pounding through ballads
 of us
 rubber hits pavement
 over and over again
 pounding through
 ballads of ancestry
 letting history unravel itself
 on gravel
 moving at top speed
 stories of the unknown
 attaching onto broken soles
 with each step
 picking up pieces

knowledge

rubber hits pavement
 trying to find
 answers to
 what is behind
 these common realities
 and past origins
 pieces of sidewalk
 become flooded
 with
 dialect of history
 myth and poetry
 weaving in and out through
 threads of cement
 nuzzling themselves into crevices
 impacted into grooves
 storing reference
 for empty soles
 empty lives

Diana Wilkins SAS '02

PHOENIX

Poor Rich Man

Wake up poor rich man
your servants' hands that laid the plans
for the dungeon you call home
have set your food at bedside
just warm enough to complain
that you don't want it anymore

Wake up poor rich man
your suit so fine
wore it one time
must take it back for lack of style
because your manipulative friends say
that it went out a long while ago

Wake up Poor Rich man no time to sleep
You've got money to keep

Wake up poor rich man
This is your rude awakening
From your real dreams of evil things
And all your life
You've been causing people strife
So your wallet stays fat
And your stocks and bonds are where it's at
Rich man how can you be so poor
When there's so much in store for you
And you've got so much more than the neighbors next door

Wake up poor rich man
you spent your time feeling sorry for yourself
and cared only about making more of your wealth
And while the poor ones you kept poor just sat and cried
you stole and hurt as your life passed you by

Wake up poor rich and you need to feel alive
you sold your soul for lies
cause money's honey caught your eyes
This is no surprise
This is the day you chose to die

Jessica Elexis Hamilton SAS '03

The sound of his tone and the way he Speak

The sound of his tone and the way he speak
Erects pure passion
He makes my body so damn weak

The thought of him not being there makes me meek
Being away from his voice is something I can't ration
The sound of his tone and the way he speak

A sensual touch, a warm caress is more than what I seek
Wanting his body close to mine right now, not in my imagination
He makes my body so damn weak

Secret sexual desires being played out on the phone to the point of peak
Whispers of his fantasies upon my ear is his fashion
The sound of his tone and the way he speak

As his voice navigates my body to bring forth my inner creak
He calls out my name, to converse me with only one inclination
He makes my body so damn weak

As the day turns into night, and soon to a week
I think of talking to only him, a major part of my notion
The sound of his voice and the way he speak
He makes my body so damn weak.

Diandra E. Verwayne SAS '00

The Warrior

"This won't hurt a bit," the white-coat said, as she plunged the needle deep down into the flesh of Ruth Maize. The young woman bit her lip, and said nothing.

The Warrior knew pain, knew loss. It was not long ago when another warrior succumbed to the Black Beast. Most succumbed, for he was a formidable foe. The beast's maw was at least ten feet across. Her kinsmen put up a good fight, but it was for naught. Nevertheless, it was not the loss that mattered. Loss is not a dishonorable thing. The merit lies within the battle, not the outcome. It was already known. It was told in the stars.

The white coat handed Ruth a glass of water. Her hands trembled slightly as she took a long sip. The white coat pushed a number of buttons and left the room. Ruth was left to herself. She looked around the small room, and her eyes rested on the needle in her arm. She then looked down to the tube that was in her stomach. The words still haunted her, although it had been months since she had first heard it. "Cancer." The words still thumped in her ears, just like the first signs of danger that produced the diagnosis. "I've fallen and I can't get up," Ruth thought with a smile. What a great commercial. What a horrifying thing to happen to a 25 year old. She knew the outcome of all of this; it was just stalling the inevitable. Ruth knew that time was not on her side. Six months, possibly a year if she was lucky. She wondered why she put her body through all of this. She looked at the tube dripping with poison that was supposed to give her life. Small chances that it would give her some shred of time, and smaller still that it would give her all of her time back.

The Warrior suited up. Chain-mail, broad sword, and shield. This loss has the greatest of consequences. However, not to fight meant no honor. No warrior could ever accept that. Even when Beowulf knew the consequences, he did not stumble. He followed the true path, the honorable one.

The Black Beast was an enormous foe. Everyone knew it, and when the foe had been discovered, there was a pang of sadness that reached the heavens. The warrior knew the heavens had shed tears, for the earth was sodden with them when the Black Beast showed himself. The Warrior sighed and looked down at her shield. She saw the burst of yellow and red and her symbol, the phoenix. Its wings were spread. These wings that were forged anew were trying to reach the heavens. The Warrior stood pensively. *Can I rise again like the fabled phoenix? Will it just be my soul taking flight?*

The white coat reentered the room in the same fashion as she had before. The buttons one by one were shut off. The room breathed an eerie silence. "Sit for a couple of seconds Ruth," The white coat kindly said. Millions of times had Ruth sat here, after the poison entered her veins. Increasingly, she wondered how much longer she must endure. That depended, of course, on how long she could sit in this room and in this hospital. *Choices are so hard, sometimes*, Ruth thought, and she knew that she would be making the right one. There was no waiting anymore. The wonder and the waiting were almost done. However, for how much longer?

These questions have no answers that would please the normal ear. The Warrior milled them about in her own mind, and she knew. With every fiber of her being, she knew that at the least she would never be whole again. It struck with icy clarity. She would rather perish than not be able to fight. Taking her own life would be cowardly. Facing the Black Beast and losing was not. The warrior felt the pain of life slipping away. Soon, the warrior breathed.

Ruth choked out, "What day is it?" She looked around at the tear stained faces. *What happened?* Was the room a dream? Or the nightmare that was her reality for a year.

The smell of the rancid beast's breath as-

saulted her nose. The acrid smell made the Warrior almost retch. The beast was behind her. The battle- now or never had to take place.

The Warrior lifted the broad sword and with numbing force, she struck at the Black Beast. He dodged. Cursing, the Warrior again brought up the sword. The beast sliced her with black claws. The Warrior heard voices in the distance.

"It won't be long now," she heard them breathe.

The wound was fatal. The kingdom knew. The Warrior could hear the sobs from deep in the chasm where the fight took place. Blindly she struck again. She saw the black beast wounded, and she smiled through the pain.

Ruth heard her own labored breathing in her ear.

It had been a good fight. This battle was foretold. Thought the fight with the Black Beast was short, the journey had been long. The Warrior looked forward to the kingdom of heaven.

Professions of love met Ruth's ear. She knew all of the voices but could not see them. Ruth knew that she would have a good burial. She wanted to be cast upon the sea. This was her dream. *A brave warrior should have a good burial*, she thought. No great soliloquy. No famous last words. The kingdom will not end with her. There will be others to fight the Black Beast. And, some will win.

Jamie Kennelley SAS '00

She Cries Floods

she cries floods
 of her
 there is no
 understanding here
 tiney pebbles hitting
 nakedness, emptiness
 she is seeking navigation
 emptiness...
 filles this current
 crashing down onto
 the shore,
 her heart
 her soul
 destroying comfort
 broken memories
 broken heart
 crashing into lonliness
 walking alone
 Alone...
 she cries floods of her

Diana Wilkens SAS' 02

The Ride

It was late-very late
I waited for him to arrive.
As I stood there, I listened for his keys.
His keys had such a distinct ring to them.
I always knew that he would take me with him.

As we get into the car, he lights a cigarette
A huge cloud of smoke begins to separate us from one another.
He turns on the radio and begins tapping his dashboard to the
tune of the sound.
I talk but he does not listen.
We continue to drive.
Where are we going?
He slowly pulls up to a man, someone that I have never seen before.
He looks towards me with his head down and says,
"I'll be right back."
I sat there waiting, frightened.
Who was that man?
Where did they go?
Suddenly, I hear his keys jingle again.
He's come back.
It's now time to go.
I don't know what he's bought this time.
The smoke from his cigarette lays motionless in the air.
It continued to separate us from one another.
We stopped at a red light.
He turned on the radio again.
I sat there and listened to the beat of his own rhythm.

Angela Valituto SAS'00

When I look Up to the Sky

When I look up to the sky
I ask myself, is that the place I am heading
As I think about it, I stare up real high
To see if I can see beyond the heavens

So I ask myself, is that the place I am heading
Once my soul reaches the crossroads
I see if I can see beyond the heavens
So I pray to God for my strength to grow

And once my soul reaches the crossroads
Will I ever confront the face of evil?
So I pray to God for my strength to grow
When the devil lied and said we were equal

Will I confront the face of evil
And go somewhere my soul shouldn't be
The devil lied and said we were equal
Because all he wanted was to trap me

Will I go somewhere my soul shouldn't be?
Or will I end up in the heavens
All he wanted was to trap me
Because he knows I can die at any second

Will I end up in the heavens?
Always protected from the holy cross
He knows I can die at any second
But with God's help. I won't be lost

Tonica McAlpine SAS '02

PHOENIX

Haiku # 1

Your kiss on my lips
heals the ache in my heart
Suddenly I breathe.

Haiku # 2

Longing for your touch
I surrender my frayed heart
My soul has been healed.

Haiku # 3

I stand here alone.
I feel a chill in my heart.
It's as if I've died.

Angela Valitutto SAS '00

Poets Words Never Die

Poets words
never die whether
you cut their
hands off they
can speak it through
their mouth whether
they can't speak
they say it in
their head whether
they die it has
been written
down whether the poem is
burned it was already
read by someone
and the fire
consumed into their
heart whether
you kill that
person off
a poet's words
never die why?
because they return
to God and then descend again to
someone's soul from the Sky

Keisha Williams SAS '00

